

LATTER DAY SAINTS'

MESSENGER AND ADVOCATE.

Vol. I. No. 7.]

KIRTLAND, OHIO, APRIL, 1835.

[Whole No. 7.]

LETTER NO. 6.

Liberty, Mo. Feb. 21, 1835.

Dear Bro. in the Lord.—I take a little time to answer your 3rd letter, addressed to me in the December number of the Messenger and Advocate. Passing your apology, I come at once to the great point, in question, that this church has suffered persecution from its commencement; and that, too, in most cases, without the least provocation. Here suffer me to say, as you and I are fellow members, and have been co-servants nearly from the beginning, that we have known by example, what thousands are preaching in precept, that "they that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution."

Now, notwithstanding my body was not baptized into this church till Thursday the 10th of June, 1831, yet my heart was there from the time I became acquainted with the book of Mormon; and my hope, steadfast like an anchor, and my faith increased like the grass after a refreshing shower, when I for the first time, held a conversation with our beloved brother Joseph, (December 24th, 1830,) who I was willing to acknowledge as a prophet of the Lord, and to whom, and to whose golly account of himself and the work he was engaged in, I owe my first determination to quit the folly of my way, and the fancy and fame of this world, and seek the Lord and his righteousness, in order to enter a better world, where the duration, and glory, and honor, and power, and space, are equal and endless: And let me add that though all old churches, and some disciples, like Orpah may kiss their mother-in-law, and go back to their people, and their gods, yet, as Ruth, I am fixed in my purpose to "entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Well may you say that it is known unto me, "that this church has suffered reproach and persecution from a majority of mankind who have heard but a rumor, since its first organization, &c.—So it is. On the 30th of April, 1830, I was thrown into prison at Lyons, N. Y. by a couple of Presbyterian traders, for a small debt, for the purpose, as I was informed, of "keeping me from joining the Mormons." How many hush-breathed as you and brother Joseph passed, for writing and publishing the truth in the book of Mormon, as the constitution and law allowed, I know not, but I heard church members and others declare in language similar to the following: that every believer in the 'Golden Bible,' (as the book of Mormon was called by many) ought to be sued and sent or driven out of society. The Rochester Observer, one of the principal Presbyterian organs of the day, introduced the book of Mormon to the world with a flashy article headed 'Blasphemy' and to cap the climax of gullibility, against which the 'men of the meeting houses' showed an ardent zeal to guard their flocks, it was carefully circulated, that 'a Jesuit' had employed a young man by the name of Cowdery, to write, and through the aid of one Smith, was bringing forth a book to break down all religions. And when it came forth, some actually said that they believed it was written to destroy the present religions, because it carried religion to a nicer, or higher pitch than the old Bible.

One thing is remarkable, that of all I ever heard said about the work or book, in that day of gross darkness, not one pretended, in truth, to have the least particle of positive proof, that a man or woman joined the church for sinful purposes, or that the book contained one precept of doctrine that was contrary to pure religion; but the idea of a church with a prophet in it, in this enlightened age and land of liberty, was so exactly like old times; so agreeably to the order of the Scriptures, and so perfect a way of knowing the will of the Lord, and of what religion consisted, that the wise men of the world, and the very who watched diligently over their flocks, that their flocks might be long, white and clean, against the shearing, whispered, and sometimes talked aloud something very like, or approaching this: What is the reason, if God has any thing to reveal for the benefit of his people or his numerous churches, as he is no respecter of persons, that he does not do it, or reveal it to Dr. Clark, Dr. Gill or Dr. Scott, the commentators, or to some great minister, such as the Archbishop of England, or Dr. Ely, or even the president of the United States, or some great man that

could be believed? Then every body would know it was true, and the different churches would be bound to accept of it as they have the Bible, and our priests who are brought up and educated for the purpose, could explain it, and every body would have to obey it. But God has done his work, and we don't need any more prophets. We have Bible societies, missionary societies, abolition of slavery societies, and temperance societies, to convert the world with and bring in the Millennium, and away with your deception! False prophets, false prophets, beware! Blasphemy! We have plenty of churches, and plenty of priests to regulate them, and don't you know that God, man and the Devil will oppose you? If you start a church with a prophet in it, every body will be against you, as they were against Ann Lee, Joanna Southcote, and old Jemima Wilkinson.

But I will not pursue this subject further at present, leaving it for your addition of facts. Instead of standing in the way, and asking for the old paths, they have stood in the way, and put darkness for light, and light for darkness, till not only 'large sheets of their opinions,' and attested volumes of our lives and characters, have 'inundated our land with scurrilous reports,' but the blood of the saints has curdled upon the sacred soil of freedom, and now smokes up to heaven as a testimony that they are martyrs to that religion which has ever been despised and rejected, by every church and people that have fallen away from its true principles, and lost the gift of the Holy Ghost. Our tribulation, our suffering for the truth's sake, and our blood, (shed in defence of holiness) are testimony that says: your religion is true—and hold out faithful to the end and you will earn a crown, and a fulness of joy where the wicked cannot come—eternal with God.

As ever,

W. W. PHELPS.

Freedom, March 10th, 1835.

DEAR SIR.—I am about to address you on a subject in which I feel most deeply interested, a subject which agitates the minds and feelings of the Christian community in which we live, more than any other now extant. I mean that of the gathering out or separating of the saints from Babylon, agreeably to a command of God, that they may escape the calamities that are now impending over the nations, and are about to be poured out upon this generation.—And here permit me to premise a few remarks by way of introduction, that we may come at our subject understandingly and feel its force commensurate with its importance. Let us in the first place, to settle the minds of the doubtful, and silence the cavils of the skeptical relative to the being of God, examine the evidences by which we can satisfactorily arrive at the conclusion that there is such a being. We shall then be able, if we take up the subject step by step and reason fairly and logically, to come to definite and correct conclusions, therefore, need not be deceived, nor deceive others.

1st. There must be a great first cause to create, arrange, and set in motion the planet on which we dwell, and others belonging to this system. We believe so from the fact, that it is composed of particles of inanimate matter, which are utterly incapable of putting themselves in motion, much less of creating themselves.

2d. This planet is furnished with myriads of living creatures, which could not create themselves: there must be a great first or moving cause or principle to bring them into existence. From the order and regularity that appear in the arrangement we think it evasive of superior intelligence in the prime mover. Hence we conclude if their be intelligence, there must be spirit or mind, for matter is inert and abstract from mind, has neither intelligence nor mind. Matter has only one power, that is the power of rest or lying still, hence we argue and come to this irresistible conclusion, that there is a great prime mover or a first cause, which we call God. That he is good, and the source of all goodness, we infer from the order, harmony and divine impress that manifest themselves in all the workmanship of his hands.—Every thing that emanates from him partakes of the impress or image of its Author, and is good. We hold these to be self evident facts which can neither be weakened by argument nor evaded by sophistry or skepticism. We have seen from the foregoing premises, that he is the Creator, Prime Mover and Author of all, therefore, he made man, and made him rational and intelligent. Although he is by no means the strongest of created beings, yet the fear of him in

* My family sick at my residence in Canandaigua.

a greater or less degree rests upon all animated nature. He has power to render nature both animate and inanimate subservient to him: and from our own experience of this fact, we daily see one of the first truths recorded in holy writ verified, viz. That God gave him [man] dominion over every living thing which he had made, (see Gen. 1st 28th.) We every day see animals that are in point of physical strength superior to man, subject to him. Hence by a parity of reason we conclude that if creatures below man are subject to him, and yet are not endowed with reasoning powers, man who is endowed with those powers, is not only subject and dependent but justly so, on him who created both him and them. Now as man is rational and dependent, another argument may be adduced of his accountability, and his accountability rests on his knowledge of another fact also, viz. That he is so. This knowledge must be the first instance be communicated to him, or to use a familiar expression, a law must be promulgated before it becomes binding, and a command must precede obedience. Hence all our system of obedience to the will and commands of God rests on a revelation of his will to us. Now if it can be made to appear that he has made known his will concerning us, it is our duty to obey him. If we have a revelation of the will of God concerning us it must be of the nature of its Author, good. You are now prepared to ask for the evidences, and where they are to be found. I answer their wisdom and perspicuity of arrangement, their sublimity and depth of thought, and in some instances their clearness and force of expression are evincive of their divine origin. Another argument may be drawn from them of their Divine authority, viz. The principles they inculcate, the precepts they lay down, and the commands therein given, are all conducive to the greatest possible happiness and best conceivable good of man. Therefore, we infer they are the dictates of a superior, benevolent and intelligent God. We therefore come to the irrefragable conclusion, that what we call the Scriptures or Revelation of the will of God to us, is not only true and binding on us, but that they were given by inspiration of God, or as is expressed 2d Peter 1st, 21st. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We have another argument that they are of Divine origin. Bad or wicked men would never framed such a set of self-denying principles, so much against the natural propensities of their unsanctified natures, and publish them to the world, rendering themselves, as far as they should be believed, guilty, ridiculous and contemptible. We are sure they would not do so. Good men uninspired would not write and publish such a system for two reasons, and first: It would be above their comprehension, therefore, they could not. Secondly, They (the inspired penmen) say they were divinely inspired, therefore, good men uninspired did not write them; for good uninspired men will never assert that they did write them, when they knew in the very assertion, they would be palming an untruth intentionally upon the world.

Hence we come to this rational and logical conclusion, that what we call the Scriptures were written by inspired men, or as is expressed, 2d Timothy, 3d, 16th, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, &c. Let then these three points be considered as settled in our minds. First, That there is a great First Cause or source of intelligence, whom we call God. Secondly, That man is dependent on him and justly amenable to him. Thirdly, That what we call the Scriptures are true, because as we have seen they are an emanation from God the fountain and source of truth. We learn from perusing the Scriptures they are full of promises of good to the willing and obedient, and of evil to the unbelieving and disobedient.—When God was about to send any judgment or sore calamity upon the children of men, he always forewarned them of it, and gave them time and space for repentance. Witness the preaching of Noah to the antediluvian world. He was a preacher of righteousness, as says 2d Peter 2d, 5th; God said by him that he would inundate the earth and destroy its inhabitants. And Noah prepared an ark for the salvation of himself and family. But the world of mankind at that time disbelieved that any calamity of that kind would overtake them. We, however, notice this fact, that the unbelief of a wicked world did not make void the promises of God. And further he said, and performed what he said, and it was performed so literally that all might be left without excuse, or as the sacred penman more beautifully expresses it, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest. [Psalm 51st, 4th.] We come next to notice the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, that they were cut off in and for their wickedness. Notwithstanding they were admonished by righteous Lot not to do so wickedly, [Gen. 19th] yet even his relatives disbelieved, for as we learn in the 14th verse of the same chapter, he seemed to his sons-in-law as one that mocked. Al-

though he was delivering the Divine mandates of Almighty God. They heeded not. Lot was obedient and fled out, and the cities were destroyed. We next notice the promises of God to the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, [Gen. 17th, 5th, 26th, 3d. and 4th and 28th, 4th.] that their seed should possess the land of Canaan. Passing over the events that led them down into Egypt, after a sojourn of 430 years they left Egypt, to go up and possess the land of promise. With all the striking instances of Divine Manifestation during the 40 years they were travelling from Egypt to Canaan, we notice the revelation of God's will to them through Moses, and the ocular demonstration to all; of the pillar of a cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. Ex. 13th, 21st, 22d, the destruction of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, the fiery flying serpents sent to afflict the rebellious and unbelieving. And still with all the revelations to Moses, together with all the tokens of God's displeasure, how many there were who murmured against Moses and against Aaron and their carcases fell in the wilderness. We again notice this idea as we pass over these events. The promises and threatenings were plain to be understood and unbelief or rebellion did not nullify them, nor exempt the wicked from punishment. We notice one idea more as we pass they (the children of Israel) fought with and drove out these possessors of the land of Canaan, not only by permission but by command of God himself without paying an equivalent for it as we believe to be correct at the present day. Passing over many important events recorded in the sacred volume we come to notice the command of God to his saints to flee out of Jerusalem when they shall see it compassed about with armies, that they might not perish with the wicked who believed not the words of the Savior, when he foretold their dire calamity. We see that every prediction was literally fulfilled, and when we take a scrutinizing retrospect, we discover that every command, every promise and every threatening, have been so plainly set forth by the inspiration of Heaven, that all those who heard, evidently understood at the time, so that ignorance can never be pleaded by them in bar of Justice. We, on a review of what has been said, notice one idea more, viz. The immutability of God, that he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He said he would scatter Israel for their sins, and disperse them for their iniquities: that they should become a hissing and a by-word among all nations whither he would scatter them, and he has done so to the letter. He has said he would gather them again, or a remnant that should remain when the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, as spoken by our Savior recorded in the 21st chapter of Luke's gospel. See Isaiah 11th, 14th. And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, &c. see also Jeremiah 16, 15, and numerous others that point forward to the same happy era. We notice as before remarked the literal fulfillment of every promise and every threatening, and think it not wresting the Scriptures or a mark of credulity in us to believe and say to our fellow clay, beware of those who cry peace and safety when God has said, in substance, tribulation, wrath and anguish abide you. He is about to bring this dispensation to a close. The signs of the times presage the near approach of that day when the Savior is to set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, [Zech. 14,] when all the ungodly, the fearful and the unbelieving shall wail because of him. The saints are to be gathered literally, as the Jews have been dispersed, [See J. 2d, 32d.] They are to come out of Babylon and be not partaker of her sins that they receive not of her plagues. Rev. 18th, 4. The question now arises who is Babylon, from whom we are to come out? The Scripture definition of the word Babylon is confusion or mixture. Let us further examine this subject in the light of truth, and with a spirit of candor. We are aware that the Roman Catholic Church is fixed upon by all Protestants as the Babylon spoken of by the Revelator. But let us examine the subject a little further. Is there any more disorder or confusion in her movements, than in the rest of the professing world? She professes to be the only true church and treats all dissenters as heretics. Protestants have done the same, with the same opportunity. She gives her money with no stinted hand for purposes of education, and the promulgation of her sentiments and so do Protestants. She uses all her arts to persuade, and when she has the power, to compel others to submit to her creed and her authority. Witness the inquisition of Spain and Portugal. So have Protestants done with all their professed liberality. Witness the conduct of the Puritans of New England, even while the persecutions of the Church in their mother country must be fresh in their recollection. All these claimed to be descendants of the true Church, and all sinned then and do still, in two essential points of coming up to the Apostolic stand-

ard. 1. They had a hard, bitter, revengeful spirit towards those who differed from them in opinion. They manifested this intolerant spirit, by inflicting stripes, fines and imprisonment. 2. Although they had the zeal, they had not then, neither have they now, the spiritual gifts of an apostolic church. Hence we conclude if they had not the Spirit of Christ, nor the spiritual gifts they were none of his. Therefore, we feel that we are not doing violence to the truth, or injustice to these denominations, to rank them as a part or a branch of mysterious Babylon. Now let us examine the conduct of all Protestant dissenters and compare it with that meek and quiet spirit which we are informed is in the sight of God of great price, and we find they have it not. Let any one of them become sufficiently numerous, and she assumes the same haughty, dictatorial spirit towards those less numerous, which has been ever manifested by the Mother of harlots. Speak to them of the ancient spiritual gifts, O, say they, they were once in the Church, but they were placed in it to establish it and prove its Divine authority. At the same time Scripture says, they were placed in it by God himself, for the edifying of the body, and perfecting the saints, and no time pointed out by the same authority where they should cease, only when the object for which they were placed there should be accomplished, viz: when the saints are perfected in glory. We respectfully ask, has that object been effected? Certainly not. Then it follows, if they were necessary then for the accomplishment of any purpose, and that purpose not yet effected, they are still necessary. Do we not see a great falling away from the primitive order of things? Has not Paul's prophecy in his last epistle to his Thessalonian brethren, been literally fulfilled?—There shall be a falling away first before that day come, alluding to the second coming of Christ. We look in vain for the right spirit or the true order of things among them as a body. Confusion and every evil work are among them. They show themselves by their spirit and the fruits of it, to be the legitimate descendants of that personage, described by the Revelator as sitting upon many waters. We come now to what will be admitted, even by our opposers, viz: That it is nearly the last or close of the dispensation, or as the Scripture expression is, the last days. This being an admitted fact, we need not labor to prove it. Aside from any recent revelation on this subject, we have seen that God when about to visit his people with judgments, revealed it to his servants, the prophets. [Amos 3d, 7th.] We believe he is the same God. We have admitted that it is near the close of the dispensation; and if so, we are assured if the Scriptures be true, that there are about to appear, perplexities and distress of nations; and that men's hearts will fail them for fear of those things that are to come on the earth, see Luke 21st, 25th and 26th.—Great judgments or afflictive providences of God are all manifest tokens of his disapprobation of the conduct of his intelligent creatures. And further, he never sent any great national calamity, without warning those to be effected by it, of its near approach, as before noticed. Another fact we notice as we pass, viz: That severe judgments presuppose great wickedness in the sight of God, for he will not punish the righteous with the wicked. He said to Abraham he would spare the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah if ten righteous were to be found in them [see Gen. 18th, 32d.] Now from a view of all these circumstances.—Does the idea of converting the world to the prevailing religious sects of the day, with all the emulation, variance and strife exist among them, look like the Millennium, the peaceable reign of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Yours in gospel bonds.

W. A. COWDERY.
[To be Continued.]

Perryburg, N. Y. Jan. 30, 1835.

Dearly and well beloved brother in the Lord, it is with no small degree of satisfaction that I take my pen to inform you of my present state of mind, and the dealings of God with me since I left you last summer, and shall notice some things relating to this church and the branch in Canada. As our heavenly Father has been pleased to call us to rejoice in the same hope of our calling, for which I desire to be very thankful, and feeling as I do a great anxiety for the prosperity of my Master's cause, and believing that any information relating to the advancement of his cause and kingdom will be gratefully received by every true believer, I shall proceed to give you a short sketch of all that I consider worthy of note, since I left Kirtland, and likewise

my views on certain passages of scripture that are particularly interesting to believers in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The scriptures alluded to are those giving a description of the spiritual gifts as set forth by the apostles, which gifts were given "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: Eph. 4:14,15.

After leaving Cleveland on board the brig Illinois, which is a fine craft, we arrived at Buffalo after three days' sail, and was obliged to wait for the Canada Steam Boat two days. While there, the scourge, or judgment of God, known by the name of the Cholera, was raging greatly, calling from time to eternity very many with a few hour's warning; how sensibly did I realize the necessity of being prepared for the change that awaits all flesh.

After a fatiguing journey we reached home in good health, and found the little branch of Latter Day Saints much as when we left.—There have been some added this summer and I think they are growing in grace, and the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have the gifts as exercised anciently by the apostles; that is, the gift of tongues, and in many instances the interpretation—and the gift of healing has been exercised in several instances.

I shall here make a few remarks on the gifts. As it is a subject which interests every true believer, and but little understood by the majority of professors, and altogether denied by many, I shall call your attention to the 14th chap. of John, where the Holy Ghost was particularly promised to believers. John 14: 12. Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. In the 14th chap. the promise was made of the Holy Ghost, and in Mark, 16th chap. from the 15th to the 18th verse. The commission was there given to the apostles to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.—And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."—What was this but a promise of the Holy Ghost? You will discover that the command was to the apostles, but the promise to those that believed. Let us follow the apostles for a short time, and see if it did produce the effect which was promised. The first appearance of the Holy Ghost was on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2nd chap. from the 1st to the 5th verse. Did not the Holy Ghost produce the effect that was promised? Peter quotes the prophecy of Joel, Acts 2:17. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, &c. If their sons and daughters should prophesy, would they not be prophets and prophetesses? And if we have got beyond the last days, it will not apply to us. Peter says in the foregoing chapter, when they

were convinced of the truth, and made the enquiry, "men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." You will discover that the promise was made to all that should comply with the terms of the gospel. Let us trace it a little further and see if it produced the same effect at all times. The effect that it produced on the day of Pentecost was to speak in tongues. "And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these that speak, Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" and so goes on to enumerate 14 different languages in which they spoke: and this was wisely given to prove to the understanding of man, that the tongues that the Holy Ghost moved men to speak with, were the tongues of men. It does not follow that this should always be the case, that the nation whose tongue it is that the Holy Ghost should move men to speak with, should be present, for, says Paul while treating on the subject, 1st Cor. 14:2, For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries. Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore, let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue, pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. How is it possible for his understanding to be unfruitful, if he understood the language that he spoke? and where would be the necessity of praying for the interpretation, if the person speaking understood it already?

Let us follow the apostles a short time and see if the Holy Ghost always produced the same effect. Acts 10:46. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Acts, 19:6. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Was not this the effect that Mark said should follow? Was not this what Joel said should follow in the last days, which commenced at the day of Pentecost? Let us turn to the 1st Cor. 1:1,2, and there we shall discover that that epistle was not addressed to the Corinthians exclusively, but to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord—both their's and our's. So that if we are of the number that call upon the name of the Lord, it is addressed to us; if so, let us see what use we have for the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapter of this epistle, unless we have the gifts. But, says one, the gifts were to be taken away. I would ask when? and give you Paul's answer. Cor. 13:8,9,10. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. But, says one, they have been lost or taken away: so say I, and so says John the revelator, 13th

chap. for he saw the beast arise, that had power over every nation, kindred, tongue and people. In the 12th chap. of Rev. the church is beautifully set forth in the person of the woman. In the 13th chap. of Cor. Paul calls or compares the church to a perfect body, and John the revelator, to a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of 12 stars, which woman brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Can any person of any discernment, read the 12th chap. of Rev. and say that it does not mean the church of Christ as established by the apostles, adorned with the glory and power of God? This once established, we shall discover that the church goes into the wilderness where she was to continue a thousand two hundred and three score days, or a time, times and a half time: which is a representation of the same thing, 1260 years, how would it be possible for the woman to be in the wilderness, and the beast represented in the 13th chap. of Rev. to have power over every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and the church still to retain her order with all her gifts and graces? Take a view of the woman set forth in the 17th chap. of Rev. clothed or arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. What a disparity there is, when compared with the former woman, Rev. 12. If one was a figure of the first, or perfect church, as sanctioned by God, is not the other the church stripped of all her spiritual gifts and graces, and adorned with the works of men? It is plain to my mind that it is. If in the days of the apostles it took first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then helps, governments, gifts of healings, tongues and interpretations of tongues, to constitute a church of Christ, and we are believers in the doctrine they held forth, which we ought to be, for Paul says, Gal. 1:8, But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that we have received, let him be accursed. If we will but turn our attention to the 3rd chap. of 1st Cor. And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? for while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? If divisions show carnality, there is an abundance of it in this generation.

I feel that I cannot be thankful enough for what the Lord has done for me and my father's family. There were two members added to the church since I came home, which makes 22 since July, and there are many enquiring—may the Lord still carry on his work, for the harvest is truly great. Broth-

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er Snow was laboring in the church in Canada.

I remain in the best of bonds,
your brother, and well wisher
to the cause of my Master.

M. C. NICKERSON.

Freedom, April 3, 1835.

Brethren members of the Church of Latter Day Saints met in conference agreeably to previous appointment.

1st. Order being restored, brother Sidney Rigdon was called to the chair, and W. A. Cowdery was chosen Secretary.

2d. Opened conference by a few preliminary remarks from the chair, and a concert of prayer by the Elders present.

3d. Itinerant Elders gave a short relation of their travels and success in delivering the testimony of Jesus, the great head of the Church.

4th. Heard an address and instructions from the chair relative to the government, progress and prospects of the Church.

5th. Adjourned till to-morrow, 10 o'clock, A. M.

Saturday, April 4th, met agreeably to adjournment, and the conference was opened by prayer by the Chairman.

Proceeded 1st. to business. Heard reports from the different churches represented.

2d. The church, in Westfield, Chautauque county, is not represented, but from a source of information entitled to our entire credence, we learn that the members are the same as represented at the last conference. And the church in Laoni in the same county in point of numbers, is the same as at last conference, with the exception of one member removed.

The church in Orangeville and Java, Genesee county, now numbers but fourteen; three having been excluded since last conference. Represented by Elder Otis Shumway, Delegate.—The church in Burns, Allegany county, now numbers twenty three members, raised up and established almost wholly by the instrumentality of Elder A. J. Squires. It is represented as being in good standing—A. J. Squires, Elder. The church in Portage Allegany county, raised principally by brother Squires consists of twenty six members represented by Wm. Marks, priest. The church in Rushford, Allegany county, organized and established

March 23d, 1835, consists of twenty-six members represented by Elder A. J. Squires, who has been the instrument in the hands of the Lord in establishing it.

||In Kortright, Delaware county, there are eight members, two of them Elders, represented by John Lawson, Elder.

||In Tompkins, Delaware County, there are eight members, two of them Elders, represented by Eleazar Willes, Elder.

||A new church has been recently raised up by the instrumentality of Elders Gould and Babcock in Woodhull, in Steuben co. consisting of six members, represented by J. Gould, Elder.

The church in Grove, Allegany co. consists of eighteen members, two of whom have been added since last conference, reported by J. Gould, Elder.

The church in Avon and Genesee, Livingston county, consists of twenty-three members, one having removed, and two been excluded since last conference, Reuben Hadlock, Elder and Delegate.

The number of brethren in Munson, Monroe county and Lima, Livingston county, is eight in good standing, reported by R. Hadlock, Elder.

The church in Perrysburgh, Cattaraugus county, consists of forty members in good standing, reported by Freeman Nickerson, Elder.

||Brother Nickerson also reports two members that have not been numbered with any church, one residing in Dayton Cattaraugus county, and one in Collins, Erie county.

The church of Freedom consists of 70 reported by H. Hyde, priest.

3d. After receiving the above reports, there was a call from the chair, on all Elders and Delegates present who had matters of difficulty to adjust in their respective churches, to present them for the consideration of this conference.

Whereupon, brother Reuben Hadlock, presented a charge against Chester L. Heath, an Elder in the Avon and Genesee church for breach of covenant and not observing the word of wisdom.

4th. Moved by Elder J. Murdock, that C. L. Heath be expelled from the church. The motion was duly seconded. The evidence heard and

tion distinctly put and carried without a dissenting voice, that the said C. L. Heath be expelled.

5th. Moved and seconded that the Elders now present have their licences renewed and signed by the moderator and clerk of this conference.

6th. Resolved, That this conference adjourn sine die.

P. S. This character || on the margin is set opposite the returns of such churches or branches, as have not before been represented in any conference.

W. A. COWDERY, Sec'y.

Huntsburgh, O. April 16th, 1835.

BRO. O. COWDERY,—

Having just returned from a most interesting meeting, where baptizing was attended to, and while the curtains of night are drawn around me and I am seated in the friendly family circle with some beloved brethren, although it is snowing quite fast and is very cold, especially considering the season of the year, while musing and meditating on the past, a thought suggested itself, that, probably, a few lines from me would not be uninteresting to the readers of your most *valuable* paper.—During last summer and fall elders Joel Johnson and Oliver Granger visited this neighborhood and preached a number of times. They baptized none in this town, but elder J. preached also, in the town north of this and baptized three or four.

I first visited this place in December last, and stayed one week, during which I preached sometimes, twice a day, and the truth took hold on the hearts of many, and six of the number came out and declared it openly by obedience. Since that time I have occasionally been here and declared to them the things which I most assuredly believed, and I always found that there were some who were honest in heart and ready to obey the truth.—The church or the number of saints here at present is twenty seven, and there are a number more believing and others seriously inquiring. May the Lord grant great prosperity to the cause of truth.

On the 21st of March I attended an appointment at the center of this town, in the midst of a society commonly

ing so near them it roused up those whose craft was in danger, and I received a challenge to hold a public discussion with a Mr. J. M. Tracy, who, in his note to me, pledged himself to prove that "the book of Mormon was not a divine revelation." I have been informed that Mr. T. was formerly a Universalist preacher, but becoming tired of their principles or society, I know not which, latterly some of the Campbellites in Huntsburgh have hired him to preach for them. I accepted his offer; and on the 27th of March we met and the debate continued two days, about eight hours each, the parties speaking alternately thirty minutes. When the interview closed a majority of the congregation arose, by an anxious urgency on the part of Mr. T. to testify thereby that they did not believe in the divinity of the book of Mormon. But when I asked them if they had been convinced that it was false by Mr. Tracy's arguments, (if I might call them such,) there was not one to answer—"Yes."

Whether good has resulted from that discussion can only be known by the effects produced. As soon as the debate closed I went immediately to the water and baptized two—it being Saturday. On Sunday President J.—Smith Jr. delivered a discourse in the same house of about three hour's length, and on Monday morning four more came forward and, "were buried with Christ by baptism;" and were confirmed by the laying on of hands, in order that, "they might put off the old man with his deeds and arise and walk in newness of life."

Since I have been here this time, more have been received into the church. Thus you see that *truth* is *powerful and will prevail*.

I have for some time past been thoroughly convinced, that all that is wanting, is, to have the principles in which we believe, fairly, plainly and simply laid open to the minds of the honest in heart of this generation, in order to have the mild kingdom of the Redeemer spread and prevail over the commandments of men and the doctrines of devils. For many, even in this region, so near to Kirtland, I found when I first came to this town, knew but little of our principles. They had heard much from rumor, "it's true, but they seemed astonished when the

come to bear our principles as we hold them, without exaggeration or misrepresentation. Said they, "these things are according to the scriptures, we believe they are true, and we want to obey them." When I see people thus willing to obey the truth as soon as they learn it, my heart cries, O! that the vineyard of the Lord was filled with "the publishers of peace," that all the honest in heart might be prepared for the coming of the Lord, in power and great glory, and be ready to say, "even so come, Lord Jesus."

Then peace as in the garden of Eden will be restored to the earth, and then for a thousand years all kingdoms, nations and people from one end of heaven to the other, from the least to the greatest, will echo the sound "I know the Lord" For as Isaiah says, "all the people will be righteous."

W. E. M'LELIN.

Perry, April 19th, 1835.

DEAR BROTHER:—

As many reports have gone out about the downfall of this church, and that it is decreasing in place of increasing, I have thought it would be encouraging to our brethren to hear from us; therefore, I write to you these few lines: the church, where I reside, in the township of Perry, Richland co. numbers at this time 36 members, in good standing; five of whom have been baptized within seven days, and 4 about two months before, and some others that appear to be believing, which we trust and pray may come in. Pray for us, that the work of the Lord may continue to prosper with us, as well as all other places.—This from yours, &c.

DAVID EVANS.

BRO. COWDRY,

Sir:

From satisfactory evidence received from Connecticut concerning the conduct of elder Glad-den Bishop, we say that he is suspended as a preacher of the gospel until such times as an investigation can be had before the travelling elders from Kirtland at some one of the conferences noticed in the preceding Number of the Advocate. We are not fond of having the church of the Latter Day Saints represented by men whose con-

duct and teaching will not stand the test of the most rigid investigation.

O. HYDE,

W. E. M'LELIN, } *Clerks of*
[conference.

Kirtland, Ohio, April 27, 1835.

Messenger and Advocate.

KIRTLAND, OHIO, APRIL, 1835.

A SUMMARY.

Our brethren residing in Providence R. I. besides business of a temporal nature, request some of the elders to call on them if passing. Brother M.—Willber writes as follows:

"April 5th, I baptized 2 persons, and there are more who expect to go forward soon: things appear more encouraging than heretofore—will you invite some of the first elders this way, to see us this season? as we understand they are coming to the east. Direct them, to 'Providence R. I. No. 286 North Maine St.' We will try to have a place for them, where they may instruct the people, if possible—we want to be instructed more perfectly in the things of God."

On the perusal of this letter, the mind recurs back to the history of the individual who founded the Rhodelsland colony—Mr. Roger Williams.—Much has been said of his character, talents and personal worth; but on reviewing a short extract of his Memoirs, by Professor Knowls, we were delighted to find two remarkable items, said to be connected with his religious belief: One was, "that the true church and ministry, had been lost in the Romish apostasy, and could be again restored, only by a special Apostle raised up for that purpose." To escape the force of this thought, the Rev.—Professor says that, "the laws of interpretation were at that day, but imperfectly known." What a pity that Mr. Williams, who is represented as being a man of deep piety, and understanding the original languages, in

which the scriptures were written, could not have been favored with some modern Professor to teach him the "laws of interpretation!"

The other item was, after learning the Indian tongue, and laboring faithfully to teach them christianity, that the time for the conversion of Pagans was "postponed until another apostle should be sent with a special commission, and that with the restoration of the ministry, the gift of tongues would be bestowed for the purpose."

We only add, that our sincere prayer is, that many may be found in that place, entertaining the same belief, and looking forward for the same work of God; for most assuredly these views were correct, and according to divine teaching; and as the elders of this church are called upon from every part of the country, we leave that matter for the Lord to direct by his Holy Spirit.

Elder W. Parish writes from Paris Ten. March 19th, to elder D. Patten of this place, and among other good things says, since his last he has baptized 9 more, making a church, now, of 40 members, if we rightly remember. Thus the good cause is still progressing, and the word of truth gaining influence. It has opposers though, as is to be expected, but among a people so highly blessed with light, when the truth is laid before them, it is easily to conclude which course they will choose. The common complaint is heard—a want of more preachers to fill calls.

Elder Nathaniel Milliken writes from Saco, Maine, March 25, and says that the church in that place numbers 57, though they greatly desire a faithful elder to administer to them the word of life—Four have lately been excommunicated—one an official member (Samuel Lowell) who refused to give his license to the church. It is a matter

of regret, that individuals, after stepping aside from the right way, are unwilling to give satisfactory evidence that they have repented, when a frank and humble confession is an evidence of reformation, and restores them to the fellowship of those who strive for salvation.

TROUBLE IN THE WEST.

Our readers are aware, no doubt, that the Baptists, Presbyterians, and others, have been troubled for a long time, because "the Beast," as they are pleased to call the Catholic church, has so much power in the Valley of the Mississippi. We not unfrequently see lengthy letters, said to have been written by persons resident in, or travelling in the Valley. These letters always urge the great necessity of sending more Missionaries to convert the inhabitants of that country, to establish Sabbath schools, Tract societies, &c.

Since some few of the elders of the church of the saints have been laboring in Illinois, these very pious people, seem to be greatly alarmed again, or anew. "The Pioneer," a small semi monthly paper, devoted to the Baptist cause, and printed at "Rock Spring," contains an article, from which, and a few remarks from the Editor, we learn that the cause of truth and the dissemination of correct principles, causes a deep feeling of, not only religious animosity, but a disposition to tread in the foot steps of some others who have been forward in raising an alarm when ever the gospel was introduced in their vicinities.

It is said that the article was written "by a friend of truth," and we design occupying a few lines to show our friends the just claim the author has to this appellation.

He has, no doubt, made himself acquainted with Mr. Campbell's pamphlet of 1831, as his arguments are the same, in general, or similar; with a little addition in some respects.

The writer says: "The probability is that Smith, who had been a book-peddler, and was frequently about printing establishments, had procured some old copper plates for engravings, which he showed for golden plates."

This is a new one. We have heard our worthy brother Joseph Smith jr

called almost every thing but a book-peddler. Now, as it is, we can prove, by those who have been personally acquainted with brother Smith from his infancy that this is an absolute falsehood! Will the Editor of the Pioneer inform his "friend of truth" of the fact.

The Pioneer's "friend of truth" has certainly got ahead of Mr. Campbell: He says that the "true origin" of the writing composing the book of Mormon, is from the pen of an eccentric *Spaulding*, who carried the same to Pittsburgh, but died soon, and that since they have been altered a little, and now appear as the book of Mormon. Mr. Campbell says, that "Smith is its real author, and as ignorant and impudent a knave as ever wrote a book." Will these two gentlemen settle this dispute; for it truly looks pitiful to see this wide disagreement, since they both express so much anxiety.

This "friend of truth" says: "The book states that Christ was born in *Jerusalem* (p. 240,) whereas every child that has read the testament, knows that Christ was born in *Bethlehem*."

Since this writer has been so kind as to note the page we will look at it: it says, "For behold, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and the Son of God cometh upon the face of the earth.—And behold, he shall be born of Mary AT JERUSALEM, which is the land of our forefathers."

So much for this "friend of truth" on this subject: instead of its saying in *Jerusalem*, as this man would be glad to make his readers believe, it says "AT JERUSALEM, the LAND of their forefathers." And any man of common sense, cannot but see that this writer has a perfect understanding of the matter, for he says the land of, &c. which is sufficient to show that he meant to be understood, as he said, "at" or in the region of *Jerusalem*.—This is enough, however, to show the design of this "friend of truth."

Again, this writer says: "The name of Jesus Christ, was declared to Nephi, 545 years before it was announced to Mary, and she, in true Roman phraseology, is called 'the mother of God.'"

Two items suggest themselves upon the face of this last quotation. The writer makes a great blow that the name of Jesus Christ should be known before the days of the virgin Mary.—

We only ask a few questions on this, and pass on. Was Abel's sacrifice accepted? was life and immortality brought to light through the gospel?—see 2 Tim. 1:10. Were Enoch and Elijah wafted to the regions of everlasting life and glory, without tasting death? and as life and immortality were brought to light through the gospel, was it by the power, or knowledge of the gospel through which they obtained power over the grave? and if so, could they have understood *the gospel* and not know in what name it was preached? Did Abraham see the day of Christ, and if so, did he know his name? And finally, were not all the ancients, who were saved, saved through faith on the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world? and is not the Lamb Jesus Christ? But to the other item.

This "friend of truth" says that Mary was "called the mother of God."—The reader will please turn to the 25th page of the book of Mormon, and read: "And he [the angel] said unto me, behold, the virgin which thou seest is the *mother* of God, after the manner of the flesh."

Now, every man knows, who has read the New Testament, that Mary was called the Lord's mother; and beside we remember to have read a word or two of Paul's writings, where he says: "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now, the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not."—See Gal. 1. Here we have it—the Lord Jesus was born of a woman, had a brother, and yet had *no mother* according to the flesh!

Will our readers suffer us to make another quotation from this "friend of truth?"

"Christ is represented as having descended and spent some time on the western continent, after having ascended to heaven from Mount Olivet in Judea! This fabulous Mormon story, to say nothing of its impious character is in opposition to the declarations of God, in the New Testament, and places Mormonism in direct hostility with the word of God. See the following scriptures.—Mark, 16: 19—John chapter 14: verses 2, 3, 19;—chapter 16: verses 7, 10, 17, 28;—chapter 17: verses 4, 11, and 24, Acts 3:20, 21.—(This passage alone overthrows the whole Mormon scheme.) See also Heb. 1:3, 5; chapter 4:14, 6: 20 also chapter 9:27 and 28. In this last passage it is affirmed that Christ will come at the day of Judgment, 'the SECOND time;' whereas Mormonism affirms that he appeared the second time on

the continent of America, and that he will soon come the *third* time to the Mormons."

For the benefit of our readers we will give the foregoing quotations, entire, as the writer attempts to overthrow the book of Mormon, because it is said that the Savior descended upon this continent, after his crucifixion.—The first is Mark 16:19. "So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." This does not say that he should not come again, neither does the book of Mormon say that he did *not* ascend up on high, but that he did.

The next is John 14:2,3,19. "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also."

What, in all this? the reader will be ready to ask. The Pioneer's "friend of truth" must explain it; for we confess we find nothing to disprove the fact that Christ did not show himself to the people upon this continent: beside, there is a promise contained in the above, that if he (Christ) did go and prepare a place for his apostles, *he would come again*, and received them unto himself.!! To be sure, it says that the world should see him no more, but his apostles should? And what does that prove? It does not prove that others should not also see. And we remember to have read in the 14th chap. of this same book: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." If those who believed on Christ through the apostles, were to be one with them, and the apostles were to see him—that he was to come to them again, of course, they had the same claim, and the same right to claim a view of him.

The next is John 16:7, 18, 17, 26. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart,

I will send him unto you. Of righteousness; because I go to my Father and ye see me no more." Concerning this last we merely say that we see nothing but what is easy of explanation, when we notice the fact that he did show himself to his apostles after his *resurrection*, "and was seen of them forty days." But to go on.—"Then said some of his disciples among themselves, what is this that he saith unto us, a little while, and ye shall not see me: and because I go to the Father." This makes it plain that he would be seen again. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." Nothing objectionable in this.

But not to occupy too much space, we will give the remainder, and make but one comment upon the whole.

John 17:4,11,24. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.—And now I am no more in the world, but, Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. Father, I will that those also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Acts 3:20,21. "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Heb. 1:3,5. Also, 4:14.—6:20.—9:27,28.

"Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.—Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

The times of restitution, spoken of in Acts, the reader will notice is to be

applied to the very persons to whom it was spoken, for at the time their sins were to be blotted out. On the remainder we merely say. Christ was seen 40 days after his resurrection.—See Acts 1:3. 10, 40, 41. Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him, after he rose from the dead.—The query is, did the apostles see him, or does the historian tell an untruth? 1 Cor. 15: commence with the 3rd and end with the 8th—we only quote the 6th here. “After that (his resurrection) he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once!” Paul was personally knowing to this fact.

This “friend of truth” would have us believe that Messiah is not to come till the final judgment—this is a subject so plainly written in the bible that we deem it unnecessary to add any thing on it.

The foregoing remarks are not made because we possess a spirit of hatred against the Pioneer, or his friend of truth—we only regret that they are unwilling to embrace the truth. We do not admire the spirit by which our opponents’ article is written, neither do we deem it to be necessary to expose his simple arguments—we merely say, that all he has said, and all he can say, against the truth of the book of Mormon, or the gospel preached by the elders of the church of the Latter Day Saints, will be as perfectly unavailing against its progress, as that of the Jews formerly.

We extract the following from “the Columbia (S. C.) Hive,” of March 14. To its truth or incredibility we say nothing—our readers are left to draw their own conclusion. It is a fact, which no reader will pretend to deny, that the Catholic church has cruelly tortured many of its dissenters, and we have no doubt, but that in a coming day, the innocent blood of thousands will be brought up as a charge against some of its former members.

It might be thought a novel thing that the Pope should undertake to introduce the inquisition into this Republic, and we have no doubt but there are many who are watching his moves with great vigilance, and the least show on his part, to enforce the Catholic faith will be noticed.

As much as our blood chills on the reflection that that church has persecuted those who were unwilling to be governed by its principles, we sincerely hope that no extravagant nor unfounded report may have influence over the public mind against our Catholic community.

We not only hope this, but we honestly pray, that our happy country may never be brought to bow to the mandates of any religious society whatever. The late shameful persecution against the church of the saints in Missouri, has taught us that others beside the Catholics, would, if they had the power, exterminate all who refuse to worship the same way!

Inquisition in the United States.—The Protestant Vindicator, a very respectable religious paper, printed at Baltimore, Maryland, states that large excavations have lately been made under the Catholic Cathedral of that city, in which dungeons are constructed for the confinement and punishment of those of the catholic faith, who may denounce or renounce that religion.—It is also stated, on the authority of the same paper, that John England, present Bishop of Charleston, (S. C.) has received from the pope of Rome an appointment of “*Inquisitor General of the United States of America*” which commission he now holds as a proper authority, with the addition of Legate and Nuncio of the pope. That a Roman Inquisition should have existence in this country, at this time, altho’ necessarily unaccompanied by its usual train of cruelties and abominations, will we think, surprise most of our citizens who prefer to see it a land of liberty. Of the correctness of the Vindicator, singular as it may sound to the uninformed we entertain no doubt.—*Poughkeepsie Eagle.*

Some of our public prints are trying to “kick up a fuss” between the Protestants and Catholics. We have not yet learned when the Catholics violated the Constitution, and since the Protestants can no more than keep it honorably, we advise each party to **READ IT!**

We are requested to inform the eastern churches, that elders Hyrum Smith and Jared Carter have been appointed by the church in Kirtland to visit them this season, for the purpose of soliciting donations to finish the stone meeting house now erected in this place.

Elder Carter visited many churches last season, and was successful in obtaining sufficient, with the aid of other donations, to erect the walls, but much remains to be done yet, and the further prosecution of the work de-

pend, in a measure, upon the liberality of the saints.

Where these elders are known, a recommend would be superfluous, but as they will probably visit many churches where they are unknown by face, it is proper to say that they are men of unblemished characters, and are duly authorized to make collections, as above, known to be strictly honest and responsible.

We drop these few remarks lest our worthy brethren might labor under embarrassments, where they are not known, and we cheerfully recommend them as men capable of giving every necessary information concerning their mission.

As it is expected that elder Smith and Carter will leave for the east the first of May, they will be able to visit many churches, but should they be unable to visit them all, we hope that we may not come under censure.

The churches will also receive much benefit from the instruction which they will receive in the gospel, from these brethren and withall we wish them success, and much grace upon the saints.

The last Conference at Freedom, we are informed, was an interesting one. There were 18 elders present, who gave cheering accounts of the prospects of the work in the different parts of the country where they reside, and where they have been laboring.—It was but a short time since the elders held a conference in that place, and we may conclude from the minutes of the last, that the work has taken effect since the former, to a considerable extent; when we see six branches represented which have never been represented in a conference before.

From all we can learn, we come to the conclusion, that there is a vast region anxious to receive instruction concerning the faith and belief of this church, being excited to enquiry by the few elders who have providentially preached in that country. We look with anxiety and delight to the time of the next conference to be held in that place (Freedom) when we hope the people may generally hear.

When we bring our mind to reflect how many there are kept back from hearing this gospel, because some unprincipled person has ran forward of

the elders with a foolish false report, and that those whose profession says to the world, that they are the friends and advocates of truth, not unfrequently bringing forward these reports as arguments against the gospel, we are filled with a deep feeling of sympathy for those who are under their influence.

If a former opinion of ours is incorrect, if we have, through the influence of those whom we thought possessed understanding, embraced a system which we afterward fear is incorrect, what do we lose, if, after investigation, it proves to be so? The answer is at hand—we lose a bad principle, are convinced of a false system, and are thus prepared to embrace the truth whenever it shall be presented: and to be able to make this exchange will rejoice the heart of every individual who rightly considers the value of eternal life. We often reflect upon this, most of all points important, and are not unfrequently left to wonder why men are unwilling to attend to it. If our future state were to be like the present, if a few days, measured by this present sun, were to terminate that existence, then perhaps an excuse might be urged for neglecting to inform ourselves concerning its consequences and ends; but as it is, beyond this vale of sorrow lies, to us, an unbounded ETERNITY, where, when we inherit it, we must remain, how important above all things, that we be prepared for its consequences! And that men may receive an assurance in this life, of a crown of glory, we humbly ask our God, the great Head of the church, to give his feeble instruments sufficient grace to present the beauties of the gospel to mankind, that they may be persuaded to embrace it.

LETTER VI.

TO W. W. PHELPS, ESQ.

Dear Sir:—

Yours of the 24th February is received and inserted in this No. of the Advocate. When reviewing my letter No. 3, I am lead to conclude, that some expressions contained in it are calculated to call up past scenes, and perhaps, paint them to the mind, in a manner differently than otherwise were it not that you can speak from experience of their correctness.

I have not space you know, to go into every particular item noticed in

yours, as that would call my attention too far, or too much, from the great object lying before me,—the history of this church;—but one expression, or quotation contained in your last strikes the mind, (and I may add—the heart,) with so much force, that I cannot pass without noticing it: It is a line or two from that little book contained in the Old Testament, called “RUTH.” It says: “Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.”

There is a something breathed in this, not known to the world. The great, as many are called, may profess friendship, and covenant to share in each other's toils, for the honors and riches of this life, but it is not like the sacrifice offered by Ruth. She forsook her friends, she left her nation, she longed not for the altars of her former gods, and why? because Israel's God was God indeed? and by joining herself to HIM a reward was offered, and an inheritance promised with him when the earth was sanctified, and peoples, nations and tongues serve him acceptably? And the same covenant of Ruth's, whispers the same assurance in the same promises, and the same knowledge of the same God.

I gave, in my last, a few words, on the subject of a few items, as spoken by the angel at the time the knowledge of the record of the Nephites was communicated to our brother, and in consequence of the subject of the gospel and that of the gathering of Israel's being so connected, I found it difficult to speak of the one without mentioning the other; and this may not be improper, as it is evident, that the Lord has decreed to bring forth the fulness of the gospel in the last days, previous to gathering Jacob, but a preparatory work, and the other is to follow in quick succession.

This being of so much importance, and of so deep interest to the saints, I have thought best to give a farther detail of the heavenly message, and if I do not give it in the precise words, shall strictly confine myself to the facts in substance.

David said, (Ps. C.) make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands, that is, all the earth. Serve the Lord with

gladness: Come before his presence with singing. This he said in view of the glorious period for which he often prayed, and was anxious to behold, which he knew could not take place until the knowledge of the glory of God covered all lands, or all the earth. Again he says, [Ps. 107] O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: For his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered out of the lands from the east, and from the west; from the north and from the south.—They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out their distresses; and led them in the right way that they might go to the city of habitation.

Most clearly was it shown to the prophet, that the righteous should be gathered from all the earth: He knew that the children of Israel were led from Egypt, by the right hand of the Lord, and permitted to possess the land of Canaan, though they were rebellious in the desert, but he farther knew, that they were not gathered from the east, the west, the north and the south; at that time; for it was clearly manifested that the Lord himself would prepare a habitation, even as he said, when he would lead them to a city of refuge. In that, David saw a promise for the righteous, [see 144 Ps] when they should be delivered from those who oppressed them, and from the hand of strange children, or the enemies of the Lord; that their sons should be like plants grown up in their youth, and their daughters like corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a beautiful palace. It is then that the sons and daughters shall prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions. At that time the garners of the righteous will be full, affording all manner of store. It was while contemplating this time, and viewing this happy state of the righteous, that he further says: The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations—Praise ye the Lord!

Isaiah who was on the earth at the time the ten tribes of Israel were led away captive from the land of Canaan, was shown, not only their calamity and

affliction, but the time when they were to be delivered. After reproving them for their corruption and blindness, he prophesies of their dispersion. He says, Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire: Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is thus made desolate, being overthrown by strangers. He further says, while speaking of the iniquity of that people. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loves gifts, and follows after rewards: They judge not the fatherless, neither does the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore, says the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of my enemies. But after this calamity has befallen Israel, and the Lord has poured upon them his afflicting judgments, as he said by the mouth of Moses—I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them.—They shall be afflicted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the earth—he will also fulfill this further prediction uttered by the mouth of Isaiah. I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward you shall be called, the *city of righteousness, the faithful city*. Then will be fulfilled, also, the saying of David: And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Isaiah continues his prophecy concerning Israel, and tells them what would be done for them in the last days; for thus it is written: The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills;—and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.—And he shall judge among the nations,

and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of his people in Zion, and upon their assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence, or above, shall be a covering and a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain. And his people shall dwell safely, they shall possess the land forever, even the land which was promised to their fathers for an everlasting inheritance: for behold, says the Lord by the mouth of the prophet: The day will come that I will sow the house of Israel with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, says the Lord.

For this happy situation and blessed state of Israel, did the prophets look, and obtained a promise, that, though the house of Israel and Judah, should violate the covenant, the Lord, in the last days would make with them a new one: not according to the one which he made with their fathers in the day that he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt which, said the Lord, my covenant they broke, although I was a husband and a father unto them: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

For thus says the Lord, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry:—and I will multiply them and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them and they shall not be small. Their

children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them.

At the same time, says the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people; I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth; I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, keep not back;—bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. And in those days, and at that time, says the Lord, though Israel and Judah have been driven and scattered, they shall come together, they shall even come weeping: for with supplications will I lead them: they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, and say, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten; and watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall say, Arise, and let us go up to Zion, unto the holy Mount of the Lord our God; for he will teach us of his ways, and instruct us to walk in his paths. That the way for this to be fully accomplished, may be prepared, the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shake his hand over the river and smite it in its seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be a high way for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel when they came up out of the land of Egypt.

And thus shall Israel come: not a dark corner of the earth shall remain unexplored, nor an island of the seas be left without being visited; for as the Lord has removed them into all corners of the earth, he will cause his mercy to be as abundantly manifested in their gathering as his wrath in their dispersion, until they are gathered according to the covenant. He will, as he said by the prophet, send for many fishers and they shall fish them; and after send for many hunters, who shall hunt them; not as their enemies have to afflict, but with glad tidings of great joy, with a message of peace, and a call for their return.

And it will come to pass, that though

the house of Israel has forsaken the Lord, and bowed down and worshipping other gods, which were no gods, and been cast out before the face of the world, they will know the voice of the Shepherd when he calls upon them this time; for soon his day of power comes, and in it his people will be willing to harken to his counsel; and even now are they already beginning to be stirred up in their hearts to search for these things, and are daily reading the ancient prophets, and are marking the times, and seasons of their fulfilment, Thus God is preparing the way for their return.

But it is necessary that you should understand, that what is to be fulfilled in the last days, is not only for the benefit of Israel, but the Gentiles, if they will repent and embrace the gospel, for they are to be remembered also in the same covenant, and are to be fellow heirs with the seed of Abraham, inasmuch as they are so by faith—for God is no respecter of persons. This was shown to Moses, when he wrote—Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people!

In consequence of the transgression of the Jews at the coming of the Lord, the Gentiles were called into the kingdom, and for this obedience, are to be favored with the gospel in its fulness first, in the last days; for it is written. The first shall be last, and the last first. Therefore, when the fulness of the gospel, as was preached by the righteous, upon this land, shall come forth, it shall be declared to the Gentiles first, and whoso will repent shall be delivered, for they shall understand the plan of salvation and restoration for Israel, as the Lord manifested to the ancients.—They shall be baptized with water and with the Spirit—they shall lift up their hearts with joy and gladness, for the time of their redemption shall also roll on, and for their obedience to the faith they shall see the house of Jacob come with great glory, even with songs of everlasting joy, and with him partake of salvation.

Therefore, as the time draws near when the sun is to be darkened, the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from heaven, the Lord will bring to the knowledge of his people his commandments and statutes, that they may be prepared to stand when the earth shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, earth-